

Message Text

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ACTION AF-18

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-09 H-02 INR-10 L-03

NSAE-00 NSC-10 PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-12

RSR-01 /086 W

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R 111535 Z APR 73

FM AMEMBASSY MBABANE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4778

INFO AMEMBASSY GABORONE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE MBABANE 0724

E. O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PGOV, WZ

SUBJECT: KING CALLS MEETING OF SWAZI NATION APRIL 12;

RUMORS OF CHANGE

REF: A) MBABANE 0610; B) MBABANE 0104

1. THE RUMOR MILL IN SWAZILAND, WHICH HAS LONG PREDICTED THE IMMINENT REPLACEMENT OF AILING PRIME MINISTER, PRINCE MAKHOSINI DLAMINI, AND ALSO THAT CHANGES WERE LIKELY IN SWAZILAND CONSTITUTION, IS AGAIN HYPERACTIVE IN WAKE OF KING SOBHUZA'S ANNOUNCEMENT CALLING TOGETHER SWAZI NATION TOMORROW, APRIL 12. USUALLY RELIABLE SOURCE INFORMS THAT PARLIAMENT HAS ALSO BEEN CALLED TO ASSEMBLE FOR SHORT SESSION IN MORNING, PRIOR TO KING'S ADDRESS IN AFTERNOON. REPORTEDLY TO BE INTRODUCED IN PARLIAMENT IS MOTION SAYING GOS FINDS CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF EXISTING CONSTITUTION UNACCEPTABLE AND RECOMMENDING CHANGES TO KING. NGWENYAMA IN AFTERNOON MAY THEN APPOINT COMMISSION OF INQUIRY INTO CONSTITUTIONAL CHANGES.

2. SPECULATION IS ALSO RIFE THAT TOMORROW WILL COME LONG-EXPECTED ANNOUNCEMENT OF RETIREMENT OF AILING PRIME MINISTER. LIKELY CANDIDATES FOR SUCCESSION INCLUDE MINISTER AGRICULTURE A. K. HLOPHE, AND PRINCE SIFUBA, WITH OUTSIDE
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POSSIBILITY OF MINISTER OF JUSTICE POLYCARP DLAMINI.
CURRENT DPM ZONKE KHUMALO, WHO HAS BEEN ACTIVELY LOBBYING
FOR PM' S JOB AND WHO SOME TIME AGO LOOKED ODDS- ON FAVORITE,
NOW SEEMS LESS LIKELY CONTENDER.

3. COMMENT: HOUSE OF ASSEMBLY SESSION TOMORROW WILL BE
FIRST MEETING AFTER DELAY OF SEVERAL MONTHS BECAUSE OF
GOVERNMENT' S DILEMMA OVER SEATING OF THOMAS NGWENYA,
OPPOSITION MP ELECTED LAST YEAR, WHOM GOS HAS TRIED TO
PROVE NOT A SWAZI CITIZEN. RECENT DECISION OF APPEALS
COURT (REF A) WHICH WENT AGAINST GOVERNMENT MAY PROVE
CATALYST IN REVISION PROCESS OF CERTAIN PORTIONS OF CONSTITUTION.
SWAZIS HAVE LONG MAINTAINED THAT PRESENT WESTMINSTER- STYLE
CONSTITUTION WAS BRITISH- IMPOSED AND ALIEN TO SWAZI TRADI-
TION. PARTICULARLY UNACCEPTABLE HAS BEEN CONCEPT OF OPEN,
ORGANIZED OPPOSITION WHICH, TRADITIONALISTS SAY, IS CON-
TRARY TO SWAZI CUSTOM OF TRIBAL CONSULTATION WHERE DISSENT
IS PERMISSIBLE, FOLLOWED BY DECISION- MAKING WHICH IS THEN
UNCHALLENGED. MCCONNELL

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*** Current Classification *** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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